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ABSTRACT

This document includes an outline of the background to and the proceedings of the fourth Conference of Ministers of Education of Member States of the Europe Region held in Paris, France, September, 1988. New social and economic imperatives have pushed the role of education to the forefront of policy debate in Europe. The paper included in this document addresses a number of the crucial issues concerning education that deserve European nations' highest priority. There are four main sections in the paper. The first section, "The Human Dimension of Education," explores four questions concerning the state of education in Europe going into the 1990s: How is it catering to greater numbers and special needs? How is education responding to the ever-faster expansion of the frontiers of knowledge? How is it coping with contemporary ethical and moral problems? and How is education reacting to the impact of the new information and communication technologies? The second section, "The Computer and the Classroom," contends that given the ever-expanding role of computer technology in society, European schools can ill afford to continue the current sluggish pace of integrating computers into the classroom. The third section, "The Teacher in the Classroom," makes the argument that it is the quality of the teacher, above all else, that may well be the most important human dimension in education. The fourth section, "Regional and International Cooperation," surveys the most important areas of cooperation among European countries (understanding the national environment and understanding the social environment) and the mechanisms by which such cooperation may occur. This paper is preceded by an outline of the background to and proceedings of the Fourth Conference of Ministers of Education of Member States of the Europe Region which met in Paris in September, 1988. Two annexes follow the paper: Annex I is taken from the Conference Final Report and Annex II from one of its reference documents, "Development of Education in Europe: A Statistical Review." (DB)

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